



## **Minister Kubayi-Ngubane sends condolences to family of deceased culinary student**

**17 July 2019**

Minister of Tourism, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, has conveyed her sympathies to the family of Lehlohonolo Michael Mbele, a South African culinary student chef who tragically lost his life while on an internship programme in the United States.

The Free State born Mbele (29) was found unconscious in his room and rushed to hospital where he was treated for a brain aneurysm (brain bleed). He unfortunately met his untimely death on Sunday - a day after he was admitted.

Mbele left the country for the US on 13 June 2019 to pursue his culinary internship at The Greenbrier, a luxury American resort in West Virginia. He had recently obtained a certificate in Culinary Arts from Capsicum Culinary Studio in Rosebank, Johannesburg – one of 27 registered local culinary food and hospitality institutions working in partnership with the Department of Tourism to skill young chefs in the sector and boost tourism.

“What a tragic loss of such a young man who was at the prime of his life, a patriot who was flying our flag high and without a doubt had a lot to contribute positively to our sector. Our hearts are with the family, friends and colleagues of Lehlohonolo. We share your pain and grief at this difficult time,” said Minister Kubayi-Ngubane.

“The Department is working with officials in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation to assist the family in ensuring Mbele's remains are repatriated back home as soon as all formal processes with the US government - including a post-mortem - have been concluded,” she added.

### **Enquiries:**

**Hlengiwe Nhlabathi**

Cell: +27 (0) 64 754 8426